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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Second Committee (Part VIII)*

Rapporteur: Ms. Silvia Cristina CORADO-CUEVAS (Guatemala)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 97 (see A/51/605, para. 2). Action on questions not related to specific sub-items was taken at the 26th and 37th meetings, on 5 November and 2 December 1996. An account of the Committee's consideration of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/51/SR.26 and 37).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.2/51/L.11

2. At the 26th meeting, on 5 November 1996, the representative of the Russian Federation, on behalf of Belarus, Georgia, Latvia, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Ukraine, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Application of the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in international cooperation on the environment" (A/C.2/51/L.11), which read:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling the principles contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, in particular, those stating that States have a sovereign right to exploit their own natural resources, pursuant to their environmental and developmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in several parts, under the symbol A/51/605 and addenda.

the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction,

"Recalling also that, in view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities, and standards applied by some countries may be inappropriate or of unwarranted economic and social cost to other countries,

"Recalling further that one of the goals of international law-making on environment and sustainable development, as contained in Agenda 21, is to promote and support the effective participation of all countries concerned, in particular, developing countries, in the negotiation, implementation, review and governance of international agreements or instruments, including the provision of appropriate technical and financial assistance and other available mechanisms for that purpose and the use of differential obligations, where appropriate, and also to promote international standards for the protection of the environment which take into account the different situations and capabilities of countries,

"1. Calls upon the international community to apply, where necessary, the principle of common but differentiated responsibility in ongoing international cooperation on the protection of the environment and in efforts to implement existing instruments of international environmental law and the elaboration of new instruments, and to continue to take fully into account specific circumstances and requirements, in particular, those of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, thus facilitating their compliance with their obligations under international agreements;

"2. Strongly calls upon the international community to provide assistance and support for effective participation of all concerned countries in the implementation of their commitments in the field of environment and sustainable development, inter alia, through technical and financial assistance and the use of other appropriate mechanisms, including bilateral and regional channels and multilateral institutions and funds;

"3. Invites the Secretary-General, in the course of preparations for the special session of the General Assembly, called for the purpose of overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21, to submit information on the application of the principles contained in the Rio Declaration and proposals on further measures regarding their full account in international law-making and other forms of cooperation on the environment and development;

"4. Invites the General Assembly at its special session in 1997 to consider the issue of the application of the principles in the Rio Declaration in different legal instruments adopted so far, with particular focus on the role played by the United Nations and its bodies, and to suggest recommendations on further development of international law in the field of sustainable development."

3. At the 37th meeting, on 2 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Mohammad Reza Hadji Karim Djabbary (Islamic Republic of Iran), informed the Committee that, in the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.41 (see A/51/605/Add.2, para. 8), draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.11 was withdrawn by its sponsors.